



## **The Basics:**

*from the American Red Cross*

There are basic needs every family should plan for in case of an emergency, whether terrorism or other natural disaster such as flooding, storms or hazardous chemical releases.

During these days of heightened awareness, the American Red Cross has some suggestions for preparing a disaster kit to last for at least three days.

There are six basics you should stock for your home: water, food, first aid supplies, clothing and bedding, tools and emergency supplies, and special items. Keep the items that you would most likely need during an evacuation in an easy-to-carry container--suggested items are marked with an asterisk(\*). Possible containers include a large, covered trash container, a camping backpack, or a duffel bag.

### **Water**

- Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day. Hot environments and intense physical activity can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers, and ill people will need more.
- Store one gallon of water per person per day.
- Keep at least a three-day supply of water per person (two quarts for drinking, two quarts for each person in your household for food preparation/sanitation).\*

### **Food**

- Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. If you must heat food, pack a can of fuel gels such as Sterno. Select food items that are compact and lightweight. Include a selection of the following foods in your Disaster Supplies Kit:
  - Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables
  - Canned juices
  - Staples (salt, sugar, pepper, spices, etc.)
  - High energy foods
  - Vitamins

- Food for infants
- Comfort/stress foods

### **First Aid Kit**

Assemble a first aid kit for your home and one for each car.

- (20) adhesive bandages, various sizes.
- (1) 5" x 9" sterile dressing.
- (1) conforming roller gauze bandage.
- (2) triangular bandages.
- (2) 3 x 3 sterile gauze pads.
- (2) 4 x 4 sterile gauze pads.
- (1) roll 3" cohesive bandage.
- (2) germicidal hand wipes or waterless alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- (6) antiseptic wipes.
- (2) pair large medical grade non-latex gloves.
- Adhesive tape, 2" width.
- Anti-bacterial ointment.
- Cold pack.
- Scissors (small, personal).
- Tweezers.
- CPR breathing barrier, such as a face shield.

### **Non-Prescription Drugs**

- Aspirin or nonaspirin pain reliever
- Anti-diarrhea medication
- Antacid (for stomach upset)
- Syrup of Ipecac (use to induce vomiting if advised by the [Poison Control Center](#))
- Laxative
- Activated charcoal (use if advised by the Poison Control Center)

### **Tools and Supplies**

- Mess kits, or paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils\*
- Emergency preparedness manual\*
- Battery-operated radio and extra batteries\*
- Flashlight and extra batteries\*
- Cash or traveler's checks, change\*
- Non-electric can opener, utility knife\*
- Fire extinguisher: small canister ABC type
- Tube tent
- Pliers
- Tape
- Compass

- Matches in a waterproof container
- Aluminum foil
- Plastic storage containers
- Signal flare
- Paper, pencil
- Needles, thread
- Medicine dropper
- Shut-off wrench, to turn off household gas and water
- Whistle
- Plastic sheeting
- Map of the area (for locating shelters)

### **Sanitation**

- Toilet paper, towelettes\*
- Soap, liquid detergent\*
- Feminine supplies\*
- Personal hygiene items\*
- Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses)
- Plastic bucket with tight lid
- Disinfectant
- Household chlorine bleach

### **Clothing and Bedding**

\*Include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person.

- Sturdy shoes or work boots\*
- Rain gear\*
- Blankets or sleeping bags\*
- Hat and gloves
- Thermal underwear
- Sunglasses

### **Special Items**

- Remember family members with special requirements, such as infants and elderly or disabled persons

### **For Baby\***

- Formula
- Diapers
- Bottles
- Powdered milk
- Medications

### **For Adults\***

- Heart and high blood pressure medication
- Insulin
- Prescription drugs
- Denture needs
- Contact lenses and supplies
- Extra eye glasses

### **Entertainment**

- Games and books

### **Important Family Documents**

- Keep these records in a waterproof, portable container:
  - Will, insurance policies, contracts deeds, stocks and bonds
  - Passports, social security cards, immunization records
  - Bank account numbers
  - Credit card account numbers and companies
- Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)
- Store your kit in a convenient place known to all family members. Keep a smaller version of the supplies kit in [the trunk of your car](#).
- Keep items in airtight plastic bags. Change your stored water supply every six months so it stays fresh. Replace your stored food every six months. Re-think your kit and family needs at least once a year. Replace batteries, update clothes, etc.
- Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.

### **Plan Your Family's Escape**

**Plan where to meet after a disaster. Choose two places:**

- **Right outside your home**, in case of a sudden emergency such as a fire.
- **Outside your neighborhood**, in case you cannot return home or are asked to evacuate your neighborhood.

**After determining your meeting places, you should also:**

- **Determine the best escape routes from your home.** Find two ways out of each room. Also, determine the best two escape routes out of your neighborhood/community.
- **Ask an out-of-town friend to be your "family contact".** After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Other family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know your contact's phone number.

- **Find out how to care for your pets.** Many shelters do not allow them because of health regulations. For more information on how to care for your pets, visit our [Animal Safety](#) section on [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).